

Blue Moon Market

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EARTH DAY AND BIRTHDAY FESTIVAL WITH BLUE MOON ON CLIFFORD STREET

Earth Day this year is the tenth anniversary for Blue Moon Natural Foods in Exeter, and proprietor Kathy Gallant and her crew are celebrating both events with a day-long block party and festival. Unutil Corporation is underwriting the April 23rd Earth Day Eco-Fair.

To celebrate Earth Day and their tenth birthday, on Friday, April 22nd Blue Moon will offer a 10% discount throughout the store, including not only supplements and organic produce but their popular natural foods deli. A new raw food and juice bar opens Friday, as well.

Then, on Saturday the 23rd the real fun begins. Blue Moon's traditional parking-lot grill party expands, with the selectmen's permission, to a full block festival. Clifford Street will be closed to traffic and open to dancing, eating and crafts. The Eco-Fair goes on all day, with live music, education, and an open house at the Mind Body Sol center, a yoga studio over the store.

According to Gallant, the emphasis is on local products and education. Local school kids have been asked to create paper-bag art and poetry about Earth Day. They and their parents have been invited to share in the fun.

For consumption, locally-made items from maple syrup to hot sauce to doggie treats will be on hand. There'll be locally roasted coffee from Canterbury Coffee, who are working on a special Blue Moon roast. Samples and information from Barrington's Apple Annie, Portsmouth's Enlighten Candles, Fremont's Kith & Kin stained glass, Lee's Ragged Robin lotions, and Exeter's potter Kit Cornell, will be available, too.

Other local businesses will demonstrate the Blue Moon's mission to support "the earth-wise education of self and others." Maine Root and Sunweaver will display solar energy techniques. Unutil, as well as sponsoring the event, will have compact fluorescent bulbs available at 10 cents apiece. The Hampton corporation will share tips about energy-saving habits..

A Lebro Center of Kittery and Five Element Acupuncture of Hampton Falls will educate about health alternatives. Food information will cover the gamut, from raw food to sprouting to composting. Epping's Catnip Acres will offer potted herbs for sale. The purpose, says Gallant, is to show how small changes people make at home can help the environment.

Besides all this, live local music plays all day, with the Mill City Ramblers' bluegrass in the morning, Randy Armstrong and the Phillips Exeter Academy drummers mid-day, and rock and roll from the Amorphous Band to close out the party.

In 2004, The Blue Moon Market & Green Earth Cafe was lauded as Exeter Area Chamber of Commerce's Retail Business of the Year. "Rarely does a for-profit business take the community's best interest to heart like Blue Moon does," the selection committee said. "It's almost as if it wasn't a business at all, but rather a community center, bustling with activity at all hours of the day. Whether stopping in for a light lunch or attending a cooking or yoga class, customers are surrounded by positive vibes that radiate from every direction. Who knew health food could be so much fun?"